GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2916
ANSWERED ON:11.05.2016
Collaboration with Countries
Premachandran Shri N.K.;Senthilnathan Shri PR.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is keen in building good diplomatic relationship with foreign countries particularly the countries surrounding India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to take initiatives for strengthening BRICS and promote the activities of BRICS; and

(d) if so, the details of the action taken thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Yes. The Government has taken steps to revitalize our traditional ties with foreign countries, re-energize our strategic and commercial relations with existing and new partners and advance bilateral cooperation with all our partners. The importance of our immediate periphery in our foreign policy is reflected in the "Neighbourhood first" policy of the Government. High level visits to all countries in the region, sometimes after a gap of several years or decades have imparted new energy to bilateral ties in the region. Our engagement has focused on greater connectivity, cooperation in all domains and broader people-to-people contacts.

(c) & (d) Yes. India has taken over the BRICS Chairmanship from Russia on 15 February 2016 until 31 December 2016. The 8th BRICS Summit will be hosted on 15-16 October 2016 in Goa. The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship in 2016 is Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions. During its Chairmanship, India will host more than 70 BRICS meetings at various levels and organise several events/activities. A number of meetings and events are planned outside the Capital to popularise the grouping in the run-up to the Summit. The focus during India's BRICS Chairmanship will be on enhanced people-to-people (P2P) contacts of BRICS member states, especially youth. Following the establishment of BRICS New Development Bank and Contingent Reserve Arrangement, which are now operational, India has proposed establishment of more BRICS institutions at the 7th BRICS Summit held in Ufa, Russia, in July 2015 to further strengthen BRICS cooperation.